

Do I Need a pH Neutral Cleaning Product? Session Questions and Answers

Q: You mention pH in the discussion about waste disposal. Aren't there many other things that need to be addressed besides pH and what are they?

A: Absolutely. There are a number of other things that are often looked at when we're talking about waste disposal, COD and BOD are really big ones. To generalize, things that are pH neutral tend to have a lot of solvents and to maintain being pH neutral that means that you're going to have high BOD and COD levels compared to a balanced cleaner. So, pH is certainly one thing that is looked at, COD and BOD are another that are often looked at very quickly as well.

Q: Can you control your process with pH?

A: Short answer is no. There are so many things going into the wash bath that pH alone and monitoring the pH alone is not going to give you any control on your concentration or your process. There are a lot of other ways do it that are much more consistent and beneficial, but pH alone is not a good way to control your process.

Q: If neutral pH is not the right answer, what is the ideal pH?

A: There isn't an ideal pH. Again, the idea of balancing cleaners is really important in the sense that you don't want it to be too alkaline or up to the 14 range. However, you need to have little alkalinity in there for the buffering and for some of the wetting and corrosion protection. I think that "ideal" is the wrong word. A safe range for something that should be well balanced is kind of in that 9 – 10 range.